

## LUCHINO VISCONTI

Born in 1906 in Milan. Abandoned careers as violinist and as a trainer of show horses. Designer, assistant to Jean Renoir in France for *THE LOWER DEPTHS* (1936) and *A DAY IN THE COUNTRY* (1937), he collaborated on the screenplay for *TOSCA* (1940), a project originally intended for Renoir in Italy in 1940, but finished by Carl Koch when the war forced Renoir to leave for the United States. Turning to direction, he has carried on parallel careers as a film-maker and as a director of theater and opera.

### Feature films:

- 1942 *OSSESSIONE* Often regarded as the beginning of the neo-realist movement, this film used the James Cain novel The Postman Always Rings Twice and transposed the characters (sullen and sensual wife, fat and vulgar husband, ambitious lover) to the Po valley. Murder and desire amongst the sub-proletariat.
- 1947 *LA TERRA TREMA* The first of a projected trilogy of Sicilian life, this deals with the tribulations of fishermen living at the margins of thought and culture. Visconti wanted to show the gradual erosion of traditional beliefs and their replacement by ideology, but the final two portions fell through when *LA TERRA TREMA* proved to be uncommercial. Filmed on location at Aci-Trezza, Sicily.
- 1951 *BELLISSIMA* Anna Magnani plays a Roman petite bourgeoisie trying to get her daughter a job as a child actress at Cinecittà. The film wavers between satire on the Italian movie industry and the pathos induced by Magnani in her greatest role outside Renoir's *GOLDEN COACH*.
- 1954 *SENSO* Operatic revolution--Venice occupied by the Austrians, Il Trovatore employed as a vehicle for nationalist demonstrations, an ill-fated affair between an Italian countess whose cousin leads the resistance and an Austrian officer. Visconti treats the whole thing as if it were by Verdi: that is, trying to fathom the seriousness of spectacle, critical of the myths of the risorgimento, but ultimately giving in to excess. Farley Granger as the Austrian Lieutenant doesn't help matters, though Alida Valli is great.
- 1957 *WHITE NIGHTS* An adaptation of Dostoyevsky's Four Nights of a Dreamer, with Marcello Mastroianni and Maria Schell. Like *OSSESSIONE* and *BELLISSIMA*, this film has been long unavailable to American audiences. It is surprisingly close to Bresson's *FOUR NIGHTS OF A DREAMER* in its literalness of tone, its playing off of the superficial world of objects and surfaces with an inner, quasi-hysterical passion.
- 1960 *ROCCO AND HIS BROTHERS* Perhaps a continuation of the aborted trilogy of 1947, this naturalistic chronicle follows a family displaced from their home in the south into the industrial slums of Milan. One brother becomes a pimp, another a boxer, the family disintegrates; both fall in love with the same woman, a prostitute, and the results are more or less predictable, but done in a series of savage and absurd climaxes.



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- 1963 **THE LEOPARD** An adaptation of the best-selling novel by Lampedusa, with an international cast (Burt Lancaster, for example), the film was badly butchered by its distributors (205 mins. in the original, 161 mins. first-run, 122 mins. second-run). Also re-dubbed horribly, both in Britain and America. Still, it remains an unevenly brilliant film, especially noteworthy in its treatment of decaying aristocracy and the survival of the land--a heavier, more plodding companion-piece to **RULES OF THE GAME**.
- 1965 **SANDRA (VAGHE STELLE DELL'ORSA)** The first of Visconti's decadent set-pieces, and the first to employ incest as a central theme, though in a shadowy way here. A young married woman returns to her ancestral home, haunted by her equivocal brother, a mother in a state asylum, and her Jewish past. Like **ROCCO AND HIS BROTHERS**, **THE LEOPARD** and several subsequent films, Visconti here treats the destruction of the family--this time not as a result of social pressures but from inner rot.
- 1967 **THE STRANGER** A surprisingly successful adaptation of Camus, with Mastroianni in the role Meursegault. A heavy reliance on zoom shots is annoying, but Visconti is very successful when his camera simply observes Meursegault doing nothing--a Sunday afternoon on a balcony overlooking a street, sitting by his mother's coffin in a funeral parlor, sitting in jail. Lots of good sitting, in fact. The film stands to one side of Visconti's preoccupations in the 60's and 70's, but doesn't suffer for that.
- 1969 **THE DAMNED** A Wagnerian spectacle of decay and decadence--Visconti wanted to call it Götterdämmerung, but was told that someone else had the rights. A bourgeois industrialist family declines and wallows in the Nazi regime--a ceremonial dinner is interrupted by fatal news ("Good God, Helmut, don't tell me that the Reichstag's on fire!") and we move from there to child abuse, incest and marriage/murder/matricide. As spectacle, though, the film exposes Nazism as theater, and postulates that the whole thing was made possible by the money and resources of bourgeois industrialists (the producers of the film were almost sued by the Krupp family).
- 1971 **DEATH IN VENICE** Dirk Bogarde's second film for Visconti, this time as Thomas Mann's Aschenbach who seeks beauty and fulfillment in the city of death. The opening sequences (the ferry arriving at sunset, the pre-dinner gathering in the hotel foyer, the meals) are extraordinary. Visconti's insistence that Mann's character was based on Gustav Mahler permits him to use heart-breaking melodies from the 2nd and 5th symphonies, but is questionable. A film of texture and feeling, a sad end to the artist's romantic sensibility, the film has too many good things to be dismissed.
- 1973 **LUDWIG** Helmut Berger as the mad King of Bavaria in the final piece in Visconti's Teutonic triptych. The horror of **THE DAMNED** employed here purely as theater, the agonies of Aschenbach in **DEATH IN VENICE** turned into royal parody. Essentially a transformation of these central themes in late Visconti--theater, death, family--into something in which gesture has replaced feeling, escapade has replaced agony.



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SHOESHINE (Sciuscia) 1946

Director: Vittorio De Sica. Producer: Paolo W. Tamburella. Screenwriters: Sergio Amidei, Adolfo Franci, C.G. Viola, Cesare Zavattini. Cinematographer: Archise Brizzi. Production Company: Alfa Cinematografica.

Cast: Rinaldo Smordoni, Franco Interlenghi, Aniello Mele, Bruno Ortensi

Running time: 90 minutes

Select bibliography in English:

Agee, James. Agee on Film. New York: McDowell Obolensky, 1958.  
Arnes, Roy. Patterns of Realism. South Brunswick and New York: A.S. Barnes, 1971.  
Kael, Pauline. I Lost It At the Movies. Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, 1965.

LA TERRA TREMA (The Earth Will Tremble) 1947

Director: Luchino Visconti. Producer: Salvo d'Angelo. Production Manager: Anna Davini. Assistant Directors: Francesco Rosi, Franco Zeffirelli. Script: Luchino Visconti. Director of Photography: G.R. Aldo. Camera Operator: Gianni di Venanzo. Editor: Mario Serandrei. Music: Willi Ferrero. Sound: Vittorio Trentino.

Cast: Amateurs--the people of a small Sicilian fishing village.

Running time: 160 minutes

Select bibliography in English:

Almendros, Nestor. "Neorealist Cinematography," Film Culture, No. 20 (1959), 39-41.  
Arnes, Roy. Patterns of Realism. South Brunswick and New York: A.S. Barnes, 1971.  
Bazin, Andre. What Is Cinema? Volume II, trans. Hugh Gray. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971.  
Korte, Walter F., Jr. "Marxism and Formalism in the Films of Luchino Visconti," Cinema Journal, 11.1 (1971), 4-8.  
Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey. Visconti. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968.



Born in 1902, in Sora, outside Naples. quickly gained reputation as an actor in the theater, moved to films in 1928. Made many films as jeune premier and leading man; probably his greatest performances come as a slightly seedy and raffish type suddenly faced with a situation more deep than any he has known, and who plays out his new role to its tragic conclusion (Max Ophüls' MADAME DE and Roberto Rossellini's GENERAL DELLA ROVERE). Died in Paris, 13 November 1974.

For the student of films, De Sica's work contains about a half-dozen films of interest. The rest, before SHOESHINE and after THE ROOF, warrant only a slight stopover, though TWO WOMEN and THE GARDEN OF THE FINZI CONTINIS contain exceptional moments. But SHOESHINE, but BICYCLE THIEVES, but UMBERTO D.--these are golden works, and classics of neo-realism. Themes taken from the streets, self-effacing style which owes a great deal to newsreel photography, honesty of treatment: all elements which gave neo-realism its foundation and which were in turn imposed by its practitioners. De Sica's essential good taste and his love for people shine through these films, the idea of "humanity" enforced by methodological rigor. Both these elements seemed to desert him at times in the later career.

Feature films (no comment given for films not seen):

- 1940 ROSE SCARLATTE (co-directed with Giuseppe Amato)  
MADDALENA ZERO IN CONDOTTA
- 1941 TERESA VENERDI
- 1942 UN GARIBALDINO AL CONVENTO
- 1943 THE CHILDREN ARE WATCHING US De Sica's first work in collaboration with the screenwriter/critic/director Cesare Zavattini, who was to become one of the most influential figures in the neo-realist movement and an important influence on De Sica (together they made LA PORTA DEL CIELO, SHOESHINE, and others until they parted company--not permanently--after THE ROOF). This painful and lonely film deals with the effect of his father's suicide and his mother's neglect on a four-year-old. Makes 400 BLOWS seem like a picnic on the grass. Also known as THE LITTLE MARTYR.
- 1945 THE GATE OF HEAVEN (LA PORTA DEL CIELO)
- 1946 SHOESHINE Two boys in the slums of Rome dream of better things (a horse, for instance), are convicted of dealing in the black-market, sent to prison, and eventually betray each other. A film of social protest and deep sentiment, held together by De Sica's light touch.
- 1948 BICYCLE THIEVES A man, desperate for a job, gets one which depends on his owning a bicycle. Same bike is stolen on his first work day; film revolves around his search, discovery of the thief, and ~~his~~ failed attempt at thievery. De Sica and Zavattini used amateur actors once again, the film avoids any trace of mawkishness, and refrains from preaching. Bazin: "... one of the first examples of pure cinema. No more actors, no more story, no more sets . . ." (p. 60)
- 951 MIRACLE IN MILAN Life amongst the slum dwellers, with the inevitably sad imprisonment at the end obviated when everyone flies off on broomsticks. For the first time De Sica and Zavattini used essentially professional actors, including the great Anna Gramatica. "In this style I had two masters, Clair and Chaplin, towering above me with all the force of their genius; their example drew me on and yet, at the same time, acted as a restraint and a warning to me: it was a dangerous attraction" (De Sica). Though Bazin calls



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- Fellini's NIGHTS OF CABIRIA the end of neo-realism, the road may well stop here five years earlier, as the broomsticks take off toward a happier world.
- 1952 UMBERTO D An old pensioner loses his room, tries to commit suicide, but is prevented by an unostentatious combination of his dog and chance. Extremely chaste and restrained (some find the film constrained), with little emotional relief but utterly devoid of false sentiment.
- 1953 INDISCRETION OF AN AMERICAN WIFE (STAZIONE TERMINI) A David Selznick co-production, with Jennifer Jones lost in Milan swarming with masculine life, and Montgomery Clift an improbable Italian. Still, the film has some extraordinary moments of panic (though Jones emotes all the time) and a solid feeling for the streets. Quite slowly paced, and unsuccessful commercially.
- 1954 THE GOLD OF NAPLES An anthology film, built around the talents of Sophia Loren (her talent as an actress not yet on display in this, her first starring role), De Sica, Silvana Mangano and Totò. Four short episodes, with sex, chicanery and obsession being the main ingredients of a successful pizza.
- 1956 THE ROOF De Sica and Zavattini wanted to do a film on the housing problem in urban Italy, but somehow got sidetracked with a love story. Still, an interesting film in its attempt to re-create the spirit and sense of urgency dating to the immediate post-war years.
- 1960 TWO WOMEN (LA CIOCARA) A successful return to directing for De Sica after an absence during which he acted (theater & film), in this successful vehicle for Loren. Mother and daughter flee the cities during the Allied invasion, take to the hills with the Partisans (Belmondo plays a strange intellectual) but finally suffer at the hands (sic) of African Troops. They endure, though, and Sophia got up to accept an Academy Award.
- 1962 UNIVERSAL JUSTICE; a.k.a. THE LAST JUDGMENT  
THE CONDEMNED OF ALTONA An international co-production of Jean-Paul Sartre's play dealing with Nazi guilt. A visconti-like film: Frederic March as the Krupp-ish industrialist (bowler and cigar), Maximilian Schell as Disgrace, hidden away in the attic, and Loren as One Torn between Loyalty and Repentance. Rather creaking.
- 1963 IL BOOM (Evidently about urban commercial success, and its problems.)
- 1964 YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW A pleasant anthology of bedroom farces. In the last one Loren does a strip and Marcello Mastroianni sits up in bed and barks like a seal.  
MARRIAGE, ITALIAN STYLE Another successful attempt to cash in on Loren and Mastroianni, then Italy's biggest b.o. draws. But this melodrama (prostitute has three sons by rake, doesn't tell him, lives with him, sues him, finally marries when they're both around 50) is done so skilfully, and the acting is so extraordinary, that it falls into the category of classic kitsch. Nevertheless, a 180° turn from SHOESHINE--here the stars are meant to evoke pathos in their very presence as stars ("Look at Sophia, reduced to this!")
- 1965 A NEW WORLD (A De Sica-Zavattini film, evidently in the style of the early 50s.)



Federico Fellini  
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1920

b. 20 January in Rimini, on Italy's southwest coast; father a commercial traveller; talent as illustrator took him to Florence, work for magazines and newspapers; after a period in radio, where he furnished sketches played by Giulietta Masina, he wrote, at the request of Roberto Rossellini, a screenplay for a short film which was later transformed into *ROME, OPEN CITY*; collaboration with Rossellini followed for several films (he even played the role of the wandering "saint" in Rossellini's *THE MIRACLE*; was urged to direct by Alberto Lattuada, who gave him co-directorial credit for *VARIETY LIGHTS* (see below); rarely leaves Rome; professionally active, politically uncommitted.

The enormous financial success and the extraordinary critical furor which accompanies each of his films since *LA STRADA* makes a clear estimation of his work difficult. It is certain that *I VITELLONI* represents both a summation and a departure for Italian cinema in 1953. But the work since 1960 seems to invite distrust, each one overloading what has gone before. A past master at the handling of moral ideas, nourishing the themes which are dear to him to the point of satiety, Fellini follows at a distance the dream of a spectacle whose gaudy baroque will leave us stupefied in silence. Important: in the face of colossal genius, it would still seem possible to prefer the scenarist who evoked a simple world, exposed to view by Rossellini.

Fellini began his film career as a gagman and occasional writer for a dozen undistinguished films between 1939 and 1943; association and friendship with Rossellini and Lattuada put him in touch with the most active elements in neo-realist movement.

Non-directorial credits:

- 1945 collaborated on script, assistant director: *ROME, OPEN CITY* (dir. Rossellini)
- 1946 collaborated on story, wrote monastery episode, assistant director: *PAISAN* (dir. Rossellini)
- 1947 collaborated on story and script: *WITHOUT PITY* (dir. Lattuada)
- 1948 co-scripted (with Tullio Pinelli), assistant director, actor (opposite Anna Magnani): *THE MIRACLE* (dir. Rossellini)
- 1949 collaborated on script: *IN THE NAME OF THE LAW* (dir. Germi)
- 1950 script (with Rossellini): *LITTLE FLOWERS OF ST. FRANCIS* (dir. Rossellini)
- 1951 collaborated on story and script: *THE ROAD TO HOPE* (dir. Pietro Germi)
- collaborated on story and script: *THE CITY DEFENDS ITSELF* (dir. Germi)
- 1952 collaborated on script: *EUROPE 51* (dir. ROSSSELLINI)

Short films as director:

- 1953 "A Matrimonial Agency" in *LOVE IN THE CITY*. A young man tries to find the girl of his dreams through advertisements. Straightforward in style, and an example of Fellini's use of amateur actors.
- 1962 "The Temptation of Dr. Antonio" in *BOCCACCIO '70*. Anita Ekberg comes to life off a giant billboard and drives a censor insane. Fellini seems as insistently puritanical in his punishment as the censor, and there is some incomprehensible allegory about milk which seems to attach itself to Ekberg.



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- 1967 "Toby Dammit" in HISTOIRES EXTRAORDINAIRES (SPIRITS OF THE DEAD) A feverish morality tale about an unemployed British actor who loses his head for a Ferrari at Cinecittà. Death shows up as a little girl bouncing a kick ball.
- 1969 FELLINI: A DIRECTOR'S NOTEBOOK. Made for NBC and telecast once in this country. Like the best of the late work (CLOWNS, AMARCORD) a piece of memorabilia, on occasion haunting and placing the director stage center in his own work. Fascinating because it gives glimpses of the set and costumes for Fellini's uncompleted VOYAGE OF G. MASTORNA. Everyone is crammed into 40 minutes. "You are scared," Mastoranni tells Fellini at one point, and then signs an autograph.

Feature films as director:

- 1950 VARIETY LIGHTS (co-dir. Alberto Lattuada) Right to the heart of the matter in opting for stage and performance rather than any struggle for ordinary existence. A group of travelling "artists" make out their existence in second-rate music halls. A young girl joins the troupe, becomes a star, and leaves them.
- 1952 THE WHITE SHEIK Affectionate comedy dealing with an awe-struck country bride's romantic desire for the star of a sfumetto strip (adventures illustrated with photographs). Alberto Sordi as the Sheik makes his entrance swinging from a tree, but ultimately gets seasick. Another blow to neo-realism.
- 1953 I VITELLONI (lit. THE CALVES) Arguably Fellini's closest approximation to the original tenets of neo-realism; nevertheless, the sad lyricism already speaks of an earlier age. The lives of five small-town boys move toward the moment when they must decide whether or not to settle for the humdrum existence which seems necessarily to await them. Only one escapes, and Fellini wanted to show what happened to this character in a later film which turned out to be LA DOLCE VITA.
- 1954 LA STRADA A tightrope act between mysticism and gritty realism; again the characters are performers, the metaphors are air, fire and water and the whole enterprise totters on the brink of allegory. Giulietta Masina, Richard Basehart and Anthony Quinn form the fated triangle, as Fellini used American actors for the first time.
- 1955 IL BIDONE (THE SWINDLERS) The performers now are thoroughly counterfeit (one is artfully named Picasso), con men who try to pass themselves off as priests, businessmen and fathers. It should be noted that Broderick Crawford (soon to be seen in HIGHWAY PATROL) is named Augusto, after the clowns; his brutal death scene has its counterbalance in the redemption of Richard Basehart.
- 1956 NIGHTS OF CABIRIA Fellini's wife, Giulietta Masina, plays a heroically bedraggled prostitute with romantic ideals intact--a whore with a heart of gold-plate, and replete with mystical aspirations. Her visit to a movie star's apartment is a gem of mugging (she dips her little finger politely into the caviar) but, jilted by her boyfriend and mugged for the nth time, she must be resurrected. See Bazin's essay.



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- 1960 **LA DOLCE VITA** Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive--red sportscars bringing would-be suicides to the hospital, intellectuals killing themselves after playing Bach and talking into tape recorders, Anita Ekberg dressed as a fashionable nun, feather orgies, interesting fish. Mastroianni became the early 60's actor with his admirable penchant for eventful decline (he moves from sensitive and aspiring novelist to p.r. hack). Marvelous images: a helicopter bring Christ to the high-rise apartments, Mastroianni and Ekberg embracing in the middle of the Trevi fountain at 5 a.m., just as the water goes off.
- 1963  $8\frac{1}{2}$  The most solipsistic film of all time: crammed with invention, it aspires to a kind of sterility. About a film-maker who can't make a film, but is, of course. But the hidden message ("Aaa Nisi Masa") takes us back to childhood, simplicity, and being snaggled by large healthy women. This way ultimately lies AMARCORD, and the abandoning of the future (hence, no rocket gets launched from the big structure). Filled with breathtaking sequences (harem, dreams, press conference) and brilliant performances (Fellini is the only director to get Anouk Aimée to act). Sets by Piero Gherardi worthy of the high Paramount 30's. The ending, which is calculated to make one cry, does.
- 1965 **JULIET OF THE SPIRITS** Closing off the period of psychological extravaganzas (1960-65), Fellini tried to evoke the closed world of a timid wife in this setpiece for Masina. For the first time we move in a totally artificial world, colored and costumed--a world which evokes the claustal feelings of Giulietta and is most present in her doll-sized house. Happy to say, she gets rid of the bad spirits, and joins the good ones out on the lawn.
- 1969 **FELLINI SATYRICON** After a long silence, speech--of sorts. This re-working of Petronius never quite forswears narrative or characterization, never feels at home at the orgies, and feels impelled to moralize on occasion. Neither classical nor modern, a hybrid without distinct features.
- 1970 **THE CLOWNS** Made for Italian television, a brilliant construction of documentary, memory and re-creation. Fellini remembers the circus, sets out to film the remaining clowns and can't stand their sad old age, so stages the "Death of the Augusto" as an exercise of solace.
- 1972 **ROMA** In which the dreamer dissolves into his dream, becoming a mere bystander and witness of change. "When I set to work on LA DOLCE VITA I realised that it was out of date, not so much in period--it was a nostalgic piece of complete autobiography, set in the Rome of 1939, under Fascism therefore, a Rome which does not exist any more, a way of living and talking that have really disappeared --but outdated in terms of the actual inward story. So as I tried to set this up, to remake the story of a provincial who comes to the city with a certain stock of dreams, of fantasies and hopes, and who then yields . . . So we definitely put aside the original character, and only this new Moraldo remained . . ." So we go from I VITELLONI to LA DOLCE VITA to ROMA.
- 1974 **AMARCORD** Memories of Rimini: snow, Fascist celebrations, urine and masturbation fantasies, colossal meals, the Grand Hotel and the political ship that looks like cardboard and passes in the night. Too early to assess, but certainly FF.



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### I VITELLONI (1953)

Producer: Lorenzo Pegoraro. Director: Federico Fellini. Script: Federico Fellini, Ennio Flaiano, Tullio Pinelli. Photographer: Otello Martelli, Luciano Trasatti, Carlo Carlini. Sets: Mario Chiari. Editor: Rolando Benedetti. Music: Nino Rota.

Cast: Franco Interlenghi (Moraldo), Alberto Sordi (Alberto), Franco Fabrizi (Fausto), Eleonora Ruffo (Sandra), Leopoldo Trieste (Leopoldo), Riccardo Fellini (Riccardo), Lida Bearowa (Signora Giulia), Carlo Romano (Signor Michele), Arlette Sauvage (Woman at the cinema), Jean Brochard (Fausto's father)

Selected writing on I VITELLONI in English:

Budgen, Suzanne. Fellini (London: BFI, 1966), pp. 25-30  
Harcourt, Peter. "The Secret Life of Federico Fellini," Film Quarterly, 19.iii (1966), 7-13, 16  
Young, Vernon. On Film (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1972), pp. 60-64.

### VOYAGE TO ITALY (1953)

Production: Sveva Films-Junior Films-Italiafilm. Director: Roberto Rossellini. Script: Roberto Rossellini, Vitaliano Brancati. Photography: Enzo Serafin. Set Decoration: Piero Filippone. Editing: Jolanda Benvenuti. Music: Renzo Rossellini.

Cast: Ingrid Bergman (Katherine Joyce), George Sanders (Alexander Joyce), Maria Mauban (Marie), Paul Muller (Paul Dupont), Leslie Daniels (Tony Burton), Natalia Ray (Natalie Burton), Anne Procter (the prostitute)

Running time: 75 minutes

Selected writing on VOYAGE TO ITALY in English:

Guarner, José Luis. Roberto Rossellini (New York: Praeger, 1970), pp. 57-64  
Wood, Robin. "Roberto Rossellini's Films with Ingrid Bergman," Film Comment, 10.iv (1974), 6-7, 9-11



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died 6/3/77

b. 1906 in Rome; started in films as technical designer (he is, among other things, the inventor of the PanCinor lens), producer and documentary-maker; in 1938 he collaborated on the screenplay of a feature film, and later directed his first film under the aegis of the leading film-maker of the Fascist regime, Francesco De Robertis

Because he is the most profoundly humanistic of Italian film-makers and because he attempts to bear lucid witness to our time, because he is curious about everything and possesses a remarkably synthetic intelligence, there is a tendency to overlook the extremities of Rossellini's vision--on the one hand a fiery passion, on the other a kind of energetic didacticism.

Of course, the fire can be external and visible (the erupting volcano of Stromboli, the burning of Joan at the stake, the subterranean fires of Vesuvius in VOYAGE TO ITALY.) But his characters burn internally (Magnani in THE HUMAN VOICE, Bergman in EUROPE 51). And the didacticism is present not only in the later films done expressly as documents for television, but in the moral lessons of the middle period and the social concerns of the immediately post-war films. Of all film-makers, he most fulfills Bazin's demand for transparency of style, economy of expression and ethical (one might almost say spiritual) vision.

Feature films: (no comments offered when film has not been seen)

1941 LA NAVE BIANCA

1942 UN PILOTA RITORNA

1943 L'UOMO DELLA CROCE

1945 ROME, OPEN CITY The film which, along with SHOESHINE and BICYCLE THIEVES, established Italian cinema in the eyes of the world. This evocation of a city under occupation largely avoids rhetoric, and gets splendid performances from Anna Magnani and Aldo Fabrizi. Magnani's death in the street is so sudden that it's hard to watch after two or three viewings, and things like an SS car picking a man up on the street have a casual ease that is the mark of Rossellini's neo-realist style.

1946 PAISA An episodic film (Rossellini likes short, episodic stories) treating the liberation of the Italian peninsula. The final segment in the Po valley seems to have been the film's genesis and ranks as the best, but the shootout in Florence escapes easy irony or moralizing. Also a film of great historical importance for the Italians in assessing their own emergence from Fascism.

1947 GERMANY, YEAR ZERO The final film in the so-called "war trilogy," and the most bitter of all Rossellini's work. "I wanted to see what the enemy was like; how could they have done it?" A young man becomes convinced that his unemployed father leads a useless existence, and slowly poisons himself to death, then jumps out of a ruined building. Filmed in Germany--the opening tracking shot through what seems like ten miles of ruins, the boys playing records of Hitler in the rubble to sell to American soldiers, are things which go beyond mere plot. Along with Sirk's A TIME TO LOVE AND A TIME TO DIE, the best film made on Germany between 1933 and 1968.

1948 LOVE Rossellini's tribute to his lover, Anna Magnani, consists of two short films--Cocteau's radio play, THE HUMAN VOICE, which becomes a visual tour de force; and THE MIRACLE, about a crazy woman who is impregnated by Fellini.



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1948 LA MACHINA AMMAZZACATTIVI

1949 STROMBOLI (STROMBOLI, TERRA DI DIO) Ingrid Bergman had invited Rossellini to Hollywood after having admired the "war trilogy." The ensuing romance exiled her from American audiences for almost 25 years. STROMBOLI has become a test case for Rossellini enthusiasts--still drawing on war experiences, the director used as his story a woman from a d.p. camp who marries an ignorant fisherman and follows him to his barren island, with its ultimately symbolic volcano. She tries to leave, has an hysterical conversion, and accepts her life, both as penitence and glory. The film was drastically cut from its original length, and initiated a lengthy series of financial failures for Rossellini.

1950 LITTLE FLOWERS OF ST. FRANCIS (FRANCESCO, GIULLARE DI DIO) The director's Franciscan ethics emerge clearly for the first time in this historical approximation of 13th-century Assisi. The casual framing and episodic plot belie great inner intensity. The drama centers on feelings of humility and joy--lepers are kissed unostentatiously; a pig's foot is cut off (Godard would kill the whole animal) to feed a starving monk by a well-intentioned brother who later wants to give the pig his own foot in return. Great sense of the "medieval"--this is the film Pasolini has been trying to make for 10 or 15 years.

1952 EUROPE 51 Arguably the greatest of the Bergman-Rossellini films: a society woman abandons everything after the death of her child, works in factories and the slums, cares for a prostitute, and is ultimately committed permanently to an asylum by her husband. The distinction between "women's directors" (Mizoguchi, Cukor) and socially committed directors becomes meaningless in the face of a film like this. Sentimental and distracting at times, it has Bergman's most transcendent performance--as spiritual as Dreyer's Joan of Arc.

1953 DOV'E LA LIBERTA?

VOYAGE TO ITALY A bored bourgeois British husband & wife travel to Naples to reclaim some property and dispose of it. She comes to understand death in the midst of teeming life; he continues to be bored and irritable most of the time. They reconcile (temporarily?) at the end. Nothing but inner drama; Bergman's face, her reactions with eyes and mouth, key the whole film.

1954 JOAN OF ARC AT THE STAKE

FEAR The last Bergman-Rossellini venture, suffused with hatred and mutual suspicion: knowing that his marriage was collapsing, Rossellini utilized the theme of a husband whose distrust of his wife comes to endanger his work as a scientist. He comes to treat her as an experimental subject, and she almost commits suicide in his darkened laboratory. Reconciliation is effected through thoughts of the children, but this seems problematical in the light of what goes on before.

1958-59 INDIA After the collapse of his marriage, Rossellini returned to documentary work. Like Renoir before him and Louis Malle after him, he turned in personal turmoil to a country able to absorb vast human misery. The miles of footage, mostly shot by RR himself in 16mm, were edited down to 10 episodes. A recollection of the documentary impulses of the early films, and an anticipation of the tv work to follow.

49-54  
Bergman  
in the back



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- 1959 GENERAL DELLA ROVERE Vittorio De Sica played the title role of a semi-collaborator under the Occupation, exposed by the Germans and forced to assume the identity of a dead Resistance general in prison, for the purpose of uncovering the identity of a Resistance leader. Resistance themes are here coated to a certain extent with a pleasing amount of melodrama; extremely long takes with much careful zooming facilitated by Rossellini's new Panchinar lens.
- 1960 ERA NOTTE A ROMA
- VIVA L'ITALIA A reconstruction of Garibaldi's march through Sicily and the landing at Naples; commissioned by the Italian gov't as part of the centenary of the Risorgimento. RR does not blink the failure of the revolution, but at the same time does not give in to mere spectacle and set speeches. The camera inches forward and stops, the troops disperse, things are left unfinished. A perfect fusion of politics, aesthetics, ethics.
- 1961 VANINA VANINI
- 1962 ANIMA NERA
- 1964 THE IRON AGE Five one-hour documentaries commissioned by RAI (Italy's enterprising state television outfit), remarkable for RR's ability to infuse each historical period (from the Etruscan through WW II) with its peculiar feeling. A meditation on the subject of work, which ends in complete destruction (the bombing of a factory, as metal destroys metal). "Everything done in the cinema is of no value from the point of general usefulness. There are only a few who understand. As for the majority, not only do they get nothing, but sometimes they feel offended" (RR). The didactic impulse, which will predominate in the career from this point, thus is tempered with skeptical realism.
- 1966 THE RISE TO POWER OF LOUIS XIV Produced for French tv, a stunning analysis of historical spectacle and its uses. In order to protect his power, the young Louis forces his nobility into bankruptcy through the establishment of an absurdly elaborate court style. At the same time he utilizes his new minister, Colbert, to implement strict fiscal policies for the Crown. Filled with moments of solemn/hysterical ceremony: the King Eats, the King Rises from Bed Having Performed His Marital Duties, the King Orders a New Suit.
- 1967 LA LOTTA DELL'UOMO PER LA SUA SOPRAVVIVENZA
- 1968 ACTS OF THE APOSTLES A five-part episode for Italian tv attempting to capture the communistic spirit of the Acts. Similar in its patience and humility to LITTLE FLOWERS, but without any pretense to "plot," "realism" or "character"--a strict exercise in chastening images, with concentration on the message of the Gospels.
- 1970 SOCRATES The only tv film done entirely by RR (no help from his son, Renzo) and a project he had conceived in 1953. The trial and death of the sage.
- 1971 BLAISE PASCAL
- 1972 AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO
- THE AGE OF THE MEDICI: COSIMO DE MEDICI AND LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI



Michelangelo Antonioni  
data-sheet

b. 29 September 1912 in Ferrara; enthusiastic draughtsman, painter as child growing up in moderately wealthy bourgeois family; studied architecture and economics at Bologna, journalism at Ferrara and Rome, where he frequented the Centro Sperimentale; frequented fascist intellectual and film circles, but maintained left connections

began film career as assistant director and scriptwriter on I DUE FOSCARI (Enrico Fulchignoni, 1942), and wrote script for Rossellini's fascist-sponsored UN PILOTA RITORNA (1942); that year began active underground resistance in France while serving as assistant director on Marcel Carné's LES VISTEURS DU SOIR

between 1943 and 1955 Antonioni worked on and completed 8 short films, the most famous of which is GENTE DEL PO (People of the Po), shot in the Po valley in 1943, shown to many people in variously edited forms, taken by the Fascists to Venice where they censored much of its harshness, recovered by Antonioni in damaged state in 1947 (the negative had been destroyed)--because of Antonioni's close association with Visconti, Rossellini and other directors, this film had an impact on the development of neo-realistic cinema

passionately defended by Cahiers du Cinéma in 1962 as one of the three great Italian post-war directors (Rossellini and Visconti the others): ". . . the sense of his ability to regulate absolutely the rhythm of his work in tune to the rhythm of his movement as a human being. Yes, the rhythm is decidedly a moral one and if, in the long run, this work breathes, it does so in the precise air which this auteur has chosen to live. One thinks of what Flaubert confided to his friend Le Poittevin: 'I believe I have understood one thing, one great thing, which is that happiness, for people like us, is in the idea, and nowhere else. Do as I; play with exteriors.'" Never popular though decidedly fashionable at intervals, his work, like Bergman's, has become the victim of knee-jerk anti-intellectualism. From his first feature he has been obsessed with the failure of will and the melancholy reminders of ambition; like Rossellini his whole attempt has been to elucidate, to lay open the internal world to our gaze by residing on the surfaces of things.

Feature films: (no remarks on films not seen)

- 1950 CRONACA DI UN AMORE At 38 his first feature--the wife of a wealthy Milanese industrialist becomes entangled once again with a lower-class lover whose presence had brought about death and guilt earlier in their love. Some of upper-class satire is abrasively handled, but Lucia Bose gives a stunning performance of elegant distaste and passionate contradiction. Already the languid rhythm and precision of camera style betoken the later Antonioni.
- 1952 I VINTI
- 1952-53 LA SIGNORA SENZA CAMELIE
- 1955 LE AMICHE
- 1957 IL GRIDO (The Outcry) A man wanders through the Po Valley with his daughter, in search of employment and companionship. Inarticulate to the point of savagery (played by Steve Cochran as a combination of Brando in THE WILD ONE and Anthony Quinn in Fellini's LA STRADA), his only expressive act is jumping to his death off a water tower. Not a picture calculated to stir one's love of life, and oddly out of step with the rest of Italian filmmaking, since it returns to a documentary, neo-realist style in the same year as Fellini's NIGHTS OF CABIRIA. A continuation for A of GENTE DEL PO.



Michelangelo Antonioni  
data-sheet  
2

- 1960 L'AVVENTURA The test-case of Italian "interior realism," and a seminal film to launch the 60s, this one made Antonioni an "overnight sensation" after almost 20 years of relative obscurity. A lengthy, slow-moving story of a failed architect and his attachment to a woman (played by Monica Vitti, Antonioni's companion and colleague for a decade). Hissed off the screen at Cannes, later reviewed as a message from European Art--a carefully wrought analysis of the paralyzed will.
- 1961 LA NOTTE Mastroianni, Jeanne Moreau and Vitti starred in this tale of a novelist who gives it all up to become a p.r. hack for an industrialist. Having gone this way before--all-night parties where people jump in the pool, applaud thoroughbred horses and drop names--Pauline Kael railed against the duplicity of the films (this, LA DOLCE VITA, etc.) which pretended to criticize luxury and simultaneously revelled in it. But Antonioni remained undeterred by this saucy attack, and went on making films. Absolutely without sentiment, with characters dwarfed by the facades of buildings, or visiting places they think they have known but which, in any case, have been torn down.
- 1962 THE ECLIPSE Another dead-end affair, the third of the "Monica Vitti trilogy." The coda is provided by a literally phenomenal ending, a collocation of objects which evokes a world present and recollected. Vitti tries to find life in the weird vitality of a Roman stock broker, but it turns out that she misses him, too. With L'AVVENTURA, his most central film.
- 1964 THE RED DESERT Antonioni aestheticizes the chemical industry in Ravenna (once famous for mosaics and other arts), by posing Vitti neurotically amongst pipes and emerging steam. She seems simply to get in the way of this oddly beautiful mechanized order, dreams of escape, has a bad affair, winds up trying to cope. Instructive to compare with Fellini's JULIET OF THE SPIRITS. Antonioni's first film in color, with haunting images like a ship breaking through fog in an inland canal.
- 1966-67 BLOW-UP LA DOLCE VITA, six years later and translated into English. A fashion photographer comes of age, aesthetically and morally (how to separate?), and immobilizes himself in the process. A's most popular film, replete with orgies, putative murder, imitation-porn photography sessions and much of what was called in those days "swinging London." Also his most profound comment on the nature of film.
- 1970 ZABRISKIE POINT After two years of "research" in Berkeley (parties with the Panthers), A made this testament to the aesthetics of failed revolution for M-G-M, which had been impressed by the gross of BLOW-UP (financial gross). Inarticulacy and surfaces mean that nothing will succeed; no one has captured the physical sense of the objects which strangle us with more precision. Famous for ~~him~~ its final sequence of explosions, A's final revenge on what we have built. *Ant. had final cut.*
- 1972 CHINA A documentary on the People's Republic, for RAI and ABC. Hysterically condemned by the Chinese when shown at Cannes in May 1974 as "Stalinist revisionism" and "aesthetically backward."

NEW FILM DUE ANY TIME  
THE PASSENGER (?), writ. by P. Wollen  
w/ Nicholson & Schneider



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Antonioni credits

CRONACA DI UN AMORE (Story of a Love Affair)

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni. Screenplay: Antonioni, Daniele D'Anza, Silvio Giovaninetti, Francesco Maselli, Piero Tellini; from a story by Antonioni. Photography: Anzo Serafin. Sets: Piero Filippone. Costumes for Lucia Bose: Ferdinando Sarmi. Music: Giovanni Fusco (alto saxophone: Marcel Mule). Assistant Director: Francesco Maselli. Director of Production: Gino Rossi. Production: Villani Films (Franco Villani, Stefano Caretta).

→ ONLY 14 y. old

Cast: Lucia Bose (Paola Molon), Massimo Girotti (Guido), Ferdinando Sarmi (Enrico Fontana), Gino Rossi (Detective), Marika Roversky (Joy)

Shot in and around Milan. First shown: Biarritz Film Festival, October 1950. Premiere: Rome, 25 November 1950. Running time: 96 minutes.

No substantial study of this film exists in English.

#### THE ECLIPSE

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni. Screenplay: Antonioni, Tonino Guerra, with the assistance of Elio Bartolini and Ottiero Ottieri; from a story by Antonioni. Music: Giovanni Fusco. Photography: Giovanni Di Venanzo. Set design: Piero Poletto. Editing: Eraldo da Roma. Sound: Claudio Maielli. Assistant director: Franco Indovina, Gianni Arduini. Make-up: Franco Preda. Cameraman: Pasquale De Santis. Script girl: Elvira D'Amico. Production supervisor: Giorgio Baldi. Production secretary: Sergio Strizai. Assistant Editor: Marcella Benvenuti. Production manager: Danilo Marciani. Producers: Robert and Raymond Hakim. Production company: Interopa Film-Cineriz (Rome) and Paris Film Production (Paris)

Cast: Monica Vitti (Vittoria), Alain Delon (Piero), Francisco Rabal (Riccardo), Lilla Brignone (Vittoria's mother), Rossana Rory (Marta), Mirella Ricciardi (Anita), Luis Segnier (Arco)

Shot in Rome and Verona. First shown: Cannes Film Festival, June 1962. Premiere: Rome and Paris, August 1962. Running time: 125 minutes.

Pieces on THE ECLIPSE (available in Rockefeller Library):

Cameron, Ian. "Michelangelo Antonioni," Film Quarterly, 16.1 (1962), 49-58.  
Castello, Giulio Cesare. "Cinema Italiano 1962," Sight and Sound, 32.1 (1962-63), 28-31  
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IL POSTO (1961; literally, "The Job": a.k.a. "The Sound of Trumpets")

Direction and Script: Ermanno Olmi. Photography: Lamberto Caimi. Director of Production: Alberto Soffientini. Production Company: Titanus. The 24 Horses.

Cast: Sandro Panzieri (Domenico), Loredana Detto (Atonietta)

Running time: 90 minutes

Selected secondary materials (available at Brown):

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Dyer, Peter John. "The Festivals: Venice," Sight and Sound, 30.iv (1961), 170  
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Houston, Penelope. "Ermanno Olmi in London," Sight and Sound, 31.i (1961-62), 16  
-----, "The Organisation Man," Sight and Sound, 33.ii (1964), 78-81  
Simon, John. Private Screenings (New York: Viking Press, 1967), pp. 69-72  
Walsh, Martin. "Ermanno Olmi," Monogram, No. 2 (1971), 25-28

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH (1965)

Direction: Francesco Rosi. Additional scenes supervised by Antonio Cervi. Screenplay: Francesco Rosi. Photography: Gianni di Venanzo, Ajace Parolin, Pasquale de Santis. Music: Piero Piccioni.

Cast: Miguel Mateo Miguelin, Jose Gomez Sevillano, Pedro Basauri Pedracho, Linda Christian

Selected secondary materials (available at Brown):

Houston, Penelope. "Festivals 65: Cannes," Sight and Sound, 34.iii (1965), 118-19  
Kael, Pauline. Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (New York: Bantam Books, 1969), pp. 145-47

Interviews with Olmi & Rosi:

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Olmi and Charles Thomas Samuels, in Directors and Directing  
Rosi and Gideon Bachman, in Film Quarterly, Summer 1966  
Rosi and John Francis Lane, in Films and Filming, 16.xii (1970)



8½ (1963)

Direction: Federico Fellini. Script: Federico Fellini, Ennio Flaiano, Tullio Pinelli, Brunello Rondi. Based on a story by Federico Fellini and Ennio Flaiano. Photography: Gianni de Venanzo. Sets: Piero Gherardi. Editing: Leo Cattozzo. Music: Nino Rota.

Cast: Marcello Mastroianni (Guido Anselmi), Claudia Cardinale (Claudia), Anouk Aimée (Luisa Anselmi), Sandra Milo (Carla), Rossella Falk (Rossella), Barbara Steele (Gloria Morin), Guido Alberti (Pace, the producer), Madeleine Lebeau (the actress), Jean Rougeul (Daumier-Fabrizio Carini), Caterina Boratto (the vision), Annibale Ninchi (Anselmi's father), Giuditta Rissone (Anselmi's mother), Mario Pisu (Mezzabotta), Jacqueline Borbon (the dancer), Alberto Conchia (the production manager), Ian Dallas (the mind reader's assistant), Mira Gale (La Saraghina), Tito Masini (the Cardinal), Neil Robinson (the actress's agent), Eugene Walter (American journalist), Mary Indovino (mind reader)

135 minutes; filmed at Cinecittà and locations outside Rome

Selected bibliography on 8½:

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- Budgen, Suzanne. Fellini (London: British Film Institute, 1966), pp. 45-46, 50-66.
- Bellour, Raymond. "La Splendeur du soi-même," Etudes Cinématographiques, Nos. 28-29 (1963), 27-30
- Benderson, Albert Edward. Critical Approaches to Federico Fellini's "8½" (New York: Arno Press, 1974), 239 pp.
- Boyer, Deena. The 200 Days of "8½". (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 232 pp.
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- Cox, Harvey G., Jr. "The Purpose of the Grotesque in Fellini's Films," in Celluloid and Symbols, eds. John C. Cooper and Carl Skrade (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), p. 105
- Collet, Jean. "Le plus long chemin," Etudes Cinématographiques, Nos. 28-29 (1963), 57-61
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- Favazza, Armando. "Fellini: Analyst Without Portfolio," in Man and the Movies, ed. W.R. Robinson (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 183-86
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OMNESIONE (1942)

Director: Luchino Visconti. Script: Mario Alicata, Antonio Pietrangeli, Gianni Puccini, Giuseppe de Santis, Luchino Visconti. Based on James Cain's novel, The Postman Always Rings Twice (uncredited). Photography: Aldo Tonti, Domenico Scala. Editor: Mario Serandrei. Art Director: Gino Rosati. Music: Giuseppe Rosati. Producer: Libero Solaroli. Production Company: ICI Rome.

Cast: Clara Calamai (Giovanna), Massimo Girotti (Gino), Juan de Landa (Bragana), Elia Marcuzzo (La Spagnuolo), Dina Cristani (Anita), Vittorio Duse (truck driver), Michele Riccardini, Michele Sakara.

Locations: Ferrara and district, Ancona, Po valley.

Running time: 135 minutes. For history of early censorship and tribulations, see Leprohon and Arnes.

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- Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey. Visconti. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), pp. 14-32

THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS (1966)

Director: Gillo Pontecorvo. Script: Franco Solinas. Based on a story by Gillo Pontecorvo and Franco Solinas. Photography: Marcello Gatti. Art Director: Sergio Canevari. Music: Gillo Pontecorvo and Ennio Morricone. Editor: Mario Morra. 2nd Unit Director: Giuliano Montaldo. Producer: Antonio Musu. Production Company: Igor Film S.r.l. (Rome)

Location: Algiers

Running time: 120 minutes. First shown at Cinéma Afrique in Algiers; first U.S. showing at N.Y. Film Festival, 1967; first French showing, Fall, 1971.

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CHINA IS NEAR (1967)

Director: Marco Bellocchio. Script: Elda Tattoli, Marco Bellocchio. Based on a story by Bellocchio. Photography: Tonino delli Colli. Music: Ennio Morricone. Editing: Roberto Perpignani. Producer: Franco Cristaldi. For VIDES Films.

Cast: Glaucio Mauri (Vittorio), Elda Tattoli (Elena), Paolo Graziosi (Carlo), Daniela Surina (Giovanna), Pierluigi Aprà (Camillo)

Filmed in Bologna and Imola. Running time: 110 minutes.

THEOREM (1968)

Director: Pier Paolo Pasolini. Assistant Director: Sergio Citti. Script: Pier Paolo Pasolini; based on his own novel. Photography: Giuseppe Ruzzolini; Eastman Color. Editor: Nino Baragli. Music: Ennio Morricone. Producers: Franco Rossellini, Mauro Bolognini.

Terence Stamp (The Visitor), Silvana Mangano (Lucia), Massimo Girotti (Paolo, the husband), Anne Wiazemsky (Odetta, the daughter), Laura Betti (Emilia, the servant), Andrés José Cruz (Pietro, the son), Ninetto Davoli (Angelino)

Running time: 98 minutes.



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Pier Paolo Pasolini  
data-sheet

perhaps the major Italian intellectual of the 1960s: novelist, poet, playwright, linguistic theoretician, film critic, painter, art historian and, increasingly, a director of films; born in Bologna of a noble family (Romagnese) on his father's side, peasant stock on his mother's (Friulan); studied Friulan poetry at an early age, devoted his studies increasingly to late medieval Italian painting; admits to full participation in the oedipal myth: "For a long time I thought the whole of my erotic and emotional life was the result of this excessive, almost monstrous love for my mother"; like Visconti and Bertolucci, his work has a highly-charged homo-erotic quality, and like them he has been influenced strongly both by marxism and primitive catholicism

of his 11 novels, the best known are Una vita violenta (1959; trans. into English as A Violent Life, 1968) and Le ceneri di Gramsci (The Ashes of Gramsci, 1957); besides his well-known article "The Cinema of Poetry," he has written several brilliant pieces of structural analysis, most of which remain untranslated

From 1954 through 1962 (that is, before his first successful novel and after his first acclamation as a director of feature films) Pasolini wrote scripts, treatments, dialogue on a number of films, and was a general intellectual catalyst. He gave \$60,000 to a 21-year-old of some promise, Bernardo Bertolucci, gave him a finished script and told him to go out and film it, for example.

Feature films worked on as scenarist and script writer:

- 1954 THE WOMAN FROM FIUME (dir. Mario Soldati)
- 1955 THE PRISONER OF THE MOUNTAINS (dir. Luis Trenker)
- 1956 NIGHTS OF CABIRIA (dir. Federico Fellini)
- 1957 MARISA THE FLIRT (dir. Mauro Bolognini)
- 1958 GIOVANNI MARRIED (dir. Mauro Bolognini)
- 1959 THE WILD NIGHT (dir. Mauro Bolognini)
- 1960 DEATH OF A FRIEND (dir. Franco Rossi)
- HANDSOME ANTONIO (dir. Mauro Bolognini)
- MARANE'S SONG (dir. Cecilia Mangini)
- THE FOOLISH DAY (dir. Mauro Bolognini)
- THE LONG NIGHT OF '43 (dir. Florestano Vancini)
- THE TANK OF SEPTEMBER 8TH (dir. Gianni Puccini)
- 1961 THE GIRL IN THE SHOP WINDOW (dir. Luciano Eimer)
- 1962 A VIOLENT LIFE (dirs. Paolo Heusch and Brunello Rondi)
- THE DRY HOUSEWIFE (La Commare Secca; dir. Bernardo Bertolucci)

Feature films directed by Pasolini:

- 1961 ACCATTONE The inarticulate and fitful movements towards inherited consciousness by a small-time pimp in one of Rome's newer and less picturesque slums. Unable to establish anything but a marginal existence, the central character seems to have been untouched by any of society's broader movements, and the film explicitly demolishes several myths beloved of neo-realist orthodoxy.



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1962 MAMMA ROMA

1964 COMIZI D'AMORE

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO [SAINT] MATTHEW Pasolini's spare version of the gospel treats Christ as purposeful, humorless and efficient—a dry man in a dry landscape. Made during the papal reign of John XXIII, it reflects PPP's interest in the mythic and social roots of the original Christian impulse. A new style unfolds itself, with much use of zoom lenses and handheld "verité" work.

1966 THE HAWKS AND THE SPARROWS Two men—probably father and son—travel along an eventful road toward some new social system, accompanied by their mentor, a crow. The bird spouts marxist parables and is eventually eaten, as all teachers are; the men try to be Franciscans in emulation of Rossellini, but that doesn't work out. Highly parabolic, and inscribed with a wide range of Italian social, political and cinematic allusions.

1967 OEDIPUS REX PPP's treatment of the myth which may be most central to his own consciousness (or at least to his own notion of his own consciousness), this film marks the first of a series of overtly metaphoric autobiographies. Sophocles' play is treated as a post-psychoanalytic, purgative melodrama; but Pasolini's care in delineating action makes the film very strict in its most lyrical moments.

1968 THEOREM A young man (played by Terence Stamp as a cross between the angel of death and a naughty Oxford undergraduate) demolishes an entire family. "One thing to keep in mind," says Pasolini, "is that the bourgeoisie is always wrong no matter what it does." The film relentlessly pursues its symbolic goal, to strip the bourgeois back to a pre-social condition, and thus to destroy him.

1969 PIGSTY A film in which two stories are intercut: in the first, Anne Wiazemsky and Jean-Pierre Léaud are the children of a vulgar European industrialist; everything is played in Godard-like cartoon style, until he goes to his death at the hands (?) of a gang of pigs, who seem to know something he doesn't. In the second, which takes places either 2000 years before the first one, or 2000 years after, Pierre Clementi wanders about a savage and barren landscape, finally kills someone, eats him, and tells the authorities. The wreckage of the west seems pretty complete.

MEDEA

1971 THE DECAMERON Part of Pasolini's pre-Renaissance trilogy: an attempt to discover the roots of modern art and society. Much reliance on "pure" storytelling, relating to Pasolini's notions about the simplicity of certain kinds of cinematic representation. Also much reliance on generally rustic bawdiness, meant to be vulgar in the Rabelaisian sense. Pasolini appears as Giotto.

1972 THE CANTERBURY TALES

1974 1001 NIGHTS



Francesco Rosi  
data-sheet

b. Naples, 1922; carries with him an interest in "primitive" Southern maraudism/fantasy--the characteristic split we have noted in the work of another Neapolitan, Vittorio De Sica; studied law in Rome; became interested in film through discussions with Visconti; was assistant director on LA TERRA TREMA, wrote the script for Visconti's BELISSIMA; was assistant director on SENSO; also assisted on work by Antonioni (LE AMICHE), Mario Monicelli, Luciano Emmer; his films are largely unknown in this country, and have been seen (when seen at all) under highly divergent and unfavorable conditions

FEATURE FILMS: (no comments offered if films not seen)

- 1957 LA SPIDA A traditional bildungsfilm (a young man comes of political age), but without the lyricism of a film similar in theme, Bertolucci's BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. Already fusing documentary and narrative, the film was a sweeping indictment of political hypocrisy on the left and the right, and caused a great stir in Italy. "I am trying, through these stories of individuals, to relate a condition, to 'tell a city' (raccontare una città)."
- 1959 I MAGLIARI
- 1962 SALVATORE GIULIANO Still Rosi's most powerful film, the tale of a Sicilian bandit who becomes a pre-marxist saint; that is, the times are modern (immediately after World War II) but the ideology is non-existent (we are in the Sicily of Gramsci, which has not changed since the Risorgimento and before). Thus the State tracks Giuliano down as a bandit, but the Government knows that he is a possible rallying point for political dissent. Told in flashback, starting with the image of Giuliano's corpse being dressed for burial by his mother, and displayed for the press by the police (no accident that Rosi spent a year in the early 70's trying to convince the Cuban authorities that he should do a film on Che Guevara).
- 1963 HANDS OVER THE CITY The city is never named (though it is clearly Naples); an indictment of slum landlords; Naples is so de-romanticized (no picturesque vistas, fruit peddlers or Loren) that it could be Boston. Rod Steiger gives a brilliant performance (one of many he has given in Italian films) as the chief entrepreneur; but his deeds become almost a pretext for a brilliant and pointed analysis of the Italian political spectrum. Above all, Rosi wants to analyze and to explain; this film seems cold-hearted, but is in fact simply logical.
- 1964 THE MOMENT OF TRUTH A rather ambiguously successful attempt to deal with spectacle and corruption: a young man's pure feeling for the bullring becomes corrupted through excess. Rosi attempts to fuse documentary with narrative; and tries to undermine spectacle by employing it too profusely. Perhaps his most visual, least analytic film.
- 1967 MORE THAN A MIRACLE (C'ERA UNA VOLTA; lit., ONCE UPON A TIME) The Italian title succeeds in conveying the intent of this Neapolitan fairy tale about a common maid (played by that truly common representative of the species, Sophia Loren) and a handsome prince (none other than that Arab-Jewish gambler-prince and true friend of El Orans, Omar Sharif). A 180° switch for Rosi; he defends it in interviews as being "very Neapolitan"; and there are similarities to MIRACLE IN MILAN. There is also much cleavage, and a general air of disbelief.



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1970 MEN AGAINST (Uomini Contro) Set in the first World War, a period when Italy's role in international politics was particularly ambiguous (when not?). A young officer comes to understand that his class (low nobility) has in effect to bear the blame for the country's foreign policy; but he learns this through contacts with his men, and with his fellow officers, in concrete situations. Somewhat doctrinaire, but its action scenes and military execution stands favorable comparison with Kubrick's PATHS OF GLORY, while its class analysis is as subtle as Renoir's in GRAND ILLUSION. Obviously, the film deserves an American showing. With Mark Frechette (now doing 1 to 10 for armed robbery) and Alain Cuny.

1972 THE MATTEI AFFAIR

1974 LUCKY LUCIANO The only one of Rosi's films to get widespread American distribution; this one played over a month in Johnston alone. Obviously hyped as a successor to that successful Mafia movie, the film in fact manages to make its points about the connection between Luciano and the C.I.A. seem very plausible. Was he sent to Sicily to organize a system of distribution through the Mafia, in order to support the planned Allied invasion? Was he in fact a great patriot without respect in his own country (Is, US)? Yes, and it drove him to dope, and systems of control not entirely dissimilar from . . . but you get the point. Certainly not up to the standards of HANDS OVER THE CITY or SALVATORE GIULIANO, which remain Rosi's best work to date.



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Semester II, 1974-75

ACCATTONE (1961)

Director: Pier Paolo Pasolini. Script: Pier Paolo Pasolini. Assistant Directors: Bernardo Bertolucci, Leopoldo Savona. Assistant for Script: Sergio Citti. Director of Photography: Tonino Delli Colli. Editor: Nino Baragli. Music: Johann Sebastian Bach, arranged by Carlo Rustichelli. Producer: Alfredo Bini. Production Company: Arco Film-Cino Del Duca.

Cast: Franco Citti (Accatone), Franca Pesut (Stella), Silvana Corsini (Maddalena), Paola Guidi (Ascenza), Adriana Asti (Amore)

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DEATH OF A FRIEND (1960) *FQ article on Pas.*

Director: Franco Rossi. Screenplay: Franco Riganti, Ugo Guerra, Franco Rossi. Based on a story by: Giuseppe Berto, Oreste Brancoli, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Franco Riganti. Photography: Toni Secchi. Editing: Otello Colangeli. Music: Mario Nascimbene. Production Directors: Armando Franci, Carla Bassoli. Production Associates: Franco Riganti, Antonio Rol. Producer: Sandro Ghenzi.

Cast: Gianni Garko (Aldo), Spiros Focas (Bruno), Didi Perego (Lea), Angela Luce (Fausta), Anna Mazzuchelli (Mother), Andrea Scotti (Adriana), Fanfulla, Olimpia Cavalli.